

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2010

Remarks at a Lunch With President Vaclav Klaus of the Czech Republic and President Dmitry A. Medvedev of Russia in Prague, Czech Republic

April 8, 2010

Thank you very much, everybody. President Klaus, and to the people of the Czech Republic, thank you for your extraordinary hospitality.

To President Medvedev, Dmitry, we have learned to work together, and I'm extraordinarily grateful for your leadership and your clarity. And I think it has served us extraordinarily well during the course of these negotiations.

And to our teams, on both the Russian and the American side, I could not be prouder of the diligence and meticulousness and the degree of effort that all of you poured into crafting what I think is an extraordinarily important document that not only has helped to reset in a very concrete and tangible way U.S.-Russian relations, but I think is going to help lay the foundation for a safer world for generations to come.

We gather today in a magnificent castle, surrounded by history and the relics of thousands of years, a castle that's seen empires rise and fall, that have witnessed great movements in the arts and music and culture, spires that have survived world wars and a cold war and that now grace a capital of a vibrant democracy.

And so I think it's an indication of how we are not just creatures of fate; we can determine our fates. And that when men and women of good will, regardless of previous differences, regardless of history, regardless of a past, determined that they want to seize a better future, they can do so.

I think the Czech Republic is a testament to that ability to seize the future. I think the direction that President Medvedev has moved the Russian Federation is a testimony to the impulse to seek a new future.

In the United States, we are constantly wanting to remake our economy and our politics and our culture in ways that looks forward, even as it's grounded in the deep traditions of our past.

And so today what I'd like to do is to propose a toast not only to the extraordinary work that's been done by the men and the women in this room, but also a toast to the vision of a future in which we are defined not just by our differences, but increasingly defined by our common aims, our common goals, and our common hopes for our children and our grandchildren. And I think this treaty hopefully is one brick on that path towards a brighter future for all mankind.

So, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 2 p.m. at Prague Castle. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Categories: Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Czech Republic, President Klaus; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Russia, President Medvedev.

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